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Occupational Employment and Wages in New Orleans–Metairie–Kenner, May 2014

Workers in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.71 in May 2014, about 9 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were higher than their respective national averages in 4 of the 22 major occupational groups, including production; architecture and engineering; and transportation and material moving. Local wages were measurably lower than their respective national averages in 15 groups, including computer and mathematical, as well as protective service.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 9 of the 22 occupational groups, including food preparation and serving related; sales and related; and construction and extraction. Conversely, employment shares were significantly below their national representation in nine groups, including production; computer and mathematical; and office and administrative support. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
	United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.71	\$20.71	*	-9
Management	5.0	5.0		54.08	46.47	*	-14
Business and financial operations	5.1	4.0	*	34.81	29.67	*	-15
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.2	*	40.37	32.45	*	-20
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.9		39.19	44.52	*	14
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.7	*	33.69	32.94		-2
Community and social service	1.4	1.1	*	21.79	19.51	*	-10
Legal	0.8	1.0	*	48.61	47.21		-3
Education, training, and library	6.2	5.6	*	25.10	22.52	*	-10
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	2.0	*	26.82	25.19		-6
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.3	*	36.54	31.92	*	-13
Healthcare support	2.9	2.2	*	13.86	12.77	*	-8
Protective service	2.4	3.2	*	21.14	17.38	*	-18
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	11.3	*	10.57	9.93	*	-6
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.2		12.68	11.31	*	-11
Personal care and service	3.1	2.9		12.01	10.61	*	-12
Sales and related	10.5	11.8	*	18.59	16.83	*	-9
Office and administrative support	16.0	14.8	*	17.08	15.72	*	-8

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	*	12.09	18.37	*	52
Construction and extraction	3.9	5.0	*	22.40	20.24	*	-10
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.7	*	21.74	20.48	*	-6
Production	6.6	4.6	*	17.06	21.31	*	25
Transportation and material moving	6.8	7.5	*	16.57	18.40	*	11

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

Note: * The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—transportation and material moving—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. New Orleans had 40,260 jobs in transportation and material moving, accounting for 7.5 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.8-percent national share. The local wage for this occupational group was also significantly higher than the national average. The mean hourly wage for transportation and material moving workers in New Orleans was \$18.40, about 11 percent above the national average of \$16.57.

With employment of 11,460, hand laborers and freight, stock, and material movers was one of the largest occupations within the transportation and material moving group, as were heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (5,460) and light truck or delivery services drivers (3,300). Among the higher paying jobs were captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels, as well as ship engineers, with mean hourly wages of \$51.91 and \$47.50, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were parking lot attendants (\$9.14) and cleaners of vehicles and equipment (\$10.53). (Detailed occupational data for transportation and material moving are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of all detailed occupations, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the New Orleans metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the transportation and material moving group. For instance, sailors and marine oilers were employed at 22.8 times the national rate. Similarly, captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels, as well as ships engineers, had double-digit location quotients compared to the U.S. average, at 19.4 and 14.2, respectively. The location quotients for these three occupations were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, light truck or delivery services drivers had a location quotient of 1.0 in New Orleans, meaning the local employment share in this occupation matched the national average.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Note

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area included 4,083 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes in Louisiana.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Transportation and material moving occupations	40,260	1.1	\$18.40	\$38,270
Aircraft cargo handling supervisors	40	1.9	27.48	57,160
First-line supervisors of helpers, laborers, and material movers, hand	810	1.2	25.05	52,100
First-line supervisors of transportation and material-moving machine and vehicle operators	940	1.2	27.63	57,470
Airline pilots, copilots, and flight engineers	50	0.2	(5)	91,750
Commercial pilots	210	1.4	(5)	70,000
Bus drivers, transit and intercity	1,070	1.7	15.41	32,050
Bus drivers, school or special client	1,490	0.8	12.78	26,570
Driver/sales workers	1,360	0.8	12.57	26,140
Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers	5,460	0.8	19.52	40,600
Light truck or delivery services drivers	3,300	1.0	16.85	35,050
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs	1,330	1.9	10.48	21,800
Motor vehicle operators, all other	240	1.0	15.23	31,670
Sailors and marine oilers	2,510	22.8	20.60	42,850
Captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels	2,380	19.4	51.91	107,970
Motorboat operators	60	3.5	28.79	59,870
Ship engineers	570	14.2	47.50	98,800
Bridge and lock tenders	130	9.6	17.13	35,640
Parking lot attendants	820	1.5	9.14	19,020
Automotive and watercraft service attendants	300	0.7	14.69	30,550
Traffic technicians	(5)	(5)	19.50	40,550
Transportation inspectors	50	0.5	31.56	65,640
Transportation attendants, except flight attendants	200	3.1	11.50	23,920
Transportation workers, all other	150	1.0	15.91	33,100
Conveyor operators and tenders	210	1.3	14.38	29,900
Crane and tower operators	780	4.4	23.27	48,400
Excavating and loading machine and dragline operators	120	0.6	21.39	44,490
Industrial truck and tractor operators	1,560	0.8	15.80	32,860
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment	900	0.7	10.53	21,900
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	11,460	1.2	12.27	25,520
Machine feeders and offbearers	40	0.1	13.22	27,510
Packers and packagers, hand	720	0.3	10.63	22,100
Pump operators, except wellhead pumpers	60	1.3	23.13	48,120
Refuse and recyclable material collectors	260	0.6	14.48	30,110
Tank car, truck, and ship loaders	(5)	(5)	17.91	37,250
Material moving workers, all other	90	1.0	15.15	31,520

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.htm.

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimates not released.